

Recent ornithological publications

Most of the titles reviewed in this section of *Ibis* are available for reference at the Alexander Library of the Edward Grey Institute of Field Ornithology, Department of Zoology, South Parks Road, Oxford, UK. The library is open to BOU members, Monday to Friday (09:00–17:00 h). Please write or telephone (+44 (0)1865 271143) prior to your visit to ensure the library is open.

The aim of the Alexander Library is to build up a comprehensive collection of literature as a service to ornithologists. Its holdings include an extensive range of periodicals and a large number of reprints drawn from many sources: additional reprints of readers' papers are always welcome. The library has always greatly benefited from its close relationship with the BOU. For a number of years, all journals received in exchange for *Ibis* have been deposited in the library, as also, through the generosity of reviewers, are most of the books sent for review.

In return, as a service to readers, this review section of *Ibis* is organized and edited by Dr M.L. Birch and Prof. B.C. Sheldon of the Edward Grey Institute, with the help of a panel of contributors. They are always grateful for offers of further assistance with reviewing, especially with foreign language titles.

Part of the cost of this book review section has been subsidized by Subbuteo Natural History Books. Subbuteo are an international mail-order book company stocking over 2000 titles covering all natural and environmental sciences. They can also source titles from around the world. Titles reviewed here can be ordered from Subbuteo and payment can be accepted by credit card or cheques in £/\$. Postage, packing and insurance is £1.99 per order. International postage is charged at cost; please contact them for a quote. To order a book or to request the full catalogue please contact:

Subbuteo Natural History Books

Ref. 0252, The Rea, Upton Magna, Shrewsbury SY4 4UR, UK.

Tel: 0870 010 9700 Fax: 0870 010 9699.

Email: info@wildlifebooks.co.uk Website: <http://www.wildlifebooks.com>

ARENDT, W., FAABORG, J., WALLACE, G. & GARRIDO, O. **Bio-metrics of Birds throughout the Greater Caribbean Basin.** 33 pages, 1 CD, *Proceedings of the Western Foundation of Vertebrate Zoology*, vol. 8, no. 1. Los Angeles: Western Foundation of Vertebrate Zoology, 2004. Paperback \$25.00, outside USA add P+P, www.wfvz.org, ISSN 0511-7550.

This publication comes in the form of a short booklet and a CD. The booklet provides the background, an introduction, results and discussion to the biometrics project, and also a comprehensive bibliography. The 'meat' of the publication is held within easily accessible tables and spreadsheets on the CD. The CD is easy to load, and thus quick to start browsing through and using. Descriptive statistics for as many as nine external morphological characters (including body mass) are presented for c. 30 000 individual birds of 276 species. A morphometrics table summar-

izes the descriptive statistics for all species captured, and individual tables present the raw data files for each species, and include information on location, date, etc., for each record. The booklet quite rightly suggests that these data are relevant to studies in fields such as avian genetics and evolution, systematics, energetics, ageing and sexing, morphology and ecomorphology, conservation and management, and avian biogeography, population and community ecology. The authors must be applauded for making these data readily available. The publication is essentially a work in progress – it exposes many data gaps, so should have the effect of soliciting more data, encouraging researchers finally to publish data or of providing a focus to new studies. The authors mention that they want continually to add more data, and encourage others to do so, yet it is not made obvious how such data can be submitted for collation. Therein lies the only real problem with this publication – how, for example, will the c. 4000 records of c. 70 Jamaican

species published on the Windsor Research Centre website be incorporated into this broader Caribbean database? At a time when Caribbean bird research and conservation needs all the help it can get, this important addition to the literature is a most welcome potential catalyst.

David C. Wege

BARRETT, G., SILCOCKS, A., BARRY, S., CUNNINGHAM, R. & POULTER, R. **The New Atlas of Australian Birds**. 824 pages. Victoria: *Birds Australia*, 2003. Hardback £45.95, ISBN 1875122095.

ESTRADA, J., PEDROCCHI, V., BROTONS, L. & HERRADO, S. (eds). **Atles dels ocells nidificants de Catalunya 1999–2002 (Catalan breeding bird atlas 1999–2002)** (in Catalan and English). 638 pages. Barcelona: *Institut Català d'Ornitologia (ICO)/Lynx Edicions*, 2004. £42.00, €50.00, ISBN 8487334709.

Comparing these two massive works was a very revealing exercise, and a convincing demonstration of just how far ornithological atlases have come since the first ones appeared in the early 1970s. It was also an interesting demonstration of the flexibility of atlas methods. These two atlases cover areas about as different as they could possibly be. Australia is vast, often inhospitable and inaccessible, and has a low density of observers (around one per 1000 km²). Catalonia is small (less than 0.5% of the area of Australia), accessible and has a relatively high density of observers (one per 75 km²). These differences in geographical scale and resources explain the many clear differences in approach and results, yet despite these differences, each is close to being the perfect atlas for its own particular set of circumstances. Given the resources at their disposal, it is hard to see how either set of authors could have improved on what they have achieved. It appears that atlas techniques have developed sufficient flexibility to be able to produce useful, interesting data at just about any spatial scale, and that where sufficient observers can be mobilized, truly amazing results can be achieved.

The Australian atlas starts with an overview of the history and methodology of the atlas. The atlas grid used is one of 1° squares, within which observers were given a choice of recording methods. The numbers are impressive: over 250 000 atlas record sheets, holding nearly 5 million species records, were completed by around 7000 observers during the atlas fieldwork period (1998–2002). More than 50 atlas sheets were completed in around 60% of the 800 1° squares mapped. Inevitably, coverage was far better in the more densely populated southern fringes of the country, but sufficient information was also collected in the arid interior and the remote north to allow distributions to be assessed reliably; no mean achievement. Surveys were conducted year round, and separate distribution maps are presented for each season. One page is given for each species account, which presents a map of all records, four maps showing seasonal records, a map showing distribu-

tion of confirmed breeding records (and times of year) and some summary statistics. A useful feature of the maps is that each square is shaded according to how much coverage it received, making interpretation of the results easier. In all maps, the size of the dots showing registrations represents a measure of relative abundance, derived from a list reporting method. Where this atlas differs from many others is that there is no accompanying text, presumably due to lack of space. Although this does not detract from the value of the information presented, the lack of an explanatory text gives the book more the feel of a scientific document than an educational and recreational resource. This impact is reinforced at the back of the book, where statistical analyses of patterns of change between the first national atlas (published in 1984) and the current atlas are presented again without commentary. Clearly, space is an issue in a publication covering so many species, but perhaps the size of the seasonal maps could have been reduced to allow at least some text to explain patterns of distribution and change.

The Catalan atlas is a sumptuous and lavishly illustrated volume, as might be expected from the publishers of *Handbook of the Birds of the World*, adorned on each page by the best colour bird plates I have seen in any atlas and by full colour maps. Although Catalonia is a fraction of the size of Australia, with many fewer species, the book is almost the same size as (and much heavier than) the Australian atlas, an indication of the mass of detail presented. The book opens with illustrated descriptions of the physical environment and habitats of Catalonia, followed by a lengthy section on methods. Each species has a double-page spread, with much useful text (including an English summary), maps showing relative abundance (in striking colour contours) and distribution and breeding status on a 10-km by 10-km grid scale (with the distribution from the previous atlas also marked). Very neat bar charts indicate each species' habitat associations and altitudinal distribution, adding greatly to the amount of information presented. This is really the cutting edge of atlas technology, using highly sophisticated technical and statistical methods (as the more than 30 pages covering the methodology attest). Despite this, and like the Australian atlas, publication of the final volume took place less than two years after the end of fieldwork, a tremendous credit to the authors and organizers of both works.

Both atlases are repeats of earlier atlas schemes, and so could assess not only distribution but also changes in distribution. However, both fall short of making direct comparisons such as those shown in the second UK atlas. The Australian atlas instead shows changes in distribution broken down by biomes, rather than grid square, and the Catalan atlas simply shades squares where the species was recorded in the previous atlas. Neither of these approaches really highlights changes as graphically as they might, perhaps because of fears that methodologies or coverage might have been different. The authors of the Australian atlas might reflect that even a small amount of

accompanying text might have added further value to their wonderful achievement, and in both atlases, changes in distribution are not examined as deeply as perhaps they might be, but these are both wonderful achievements, and both these books would appear in my 'top ten' list of atlases.

Paul F. Donald

BEKOFF, M. (ed.) **Encyclopedia of Animal Behaviour**. 3 volumes. 1274 pages, numerous photographs & figures. Westport, CT, and London, UK: Greenwood Press, 2004. Hardback £200.00, set ISBN 0-313-32745-9; v.1 ISBN 0-313-32746-7, v.2 ISBN 0-313-32747-5, v.3 ISBN 0-313-33294-0.

Marc Bekoff has brought together a virtual who's who in animal behaviour to write what must be one of the broadest ranging accounts of animal behaviour to date. The authorship includes such names as John Alcock, Frank Cezilly, Lee Dugatkin, Jane Goodall, Donald Griffin, Alex Kacelnik, Judy Stamps, and many others, nearly 300 in all. It must have been a mammoth task organizing and coordinating an international group of such well-respected authors in their own right. The work is a three-volume set: Volumes 1–3, A–C, D–P and R–Z. Each volume includes an alphabetical list of entries and a further guide to related topics for ease of cross-referencing.

The Encyclopedia of Animal Behaviour is a strange but interesting mix of in-depth articles on various topics, ranging from aggression to zoos, as well as essays by notable historical figures such as Konrad Lorenz, Karl von Frisch and Niko Tinbergen all of whose Nobel Lectures are reproduced in full. Many of the articles are topic-based whereas others are descriptions about particular species or groups.

Each author has written a definitive essay on a topic for which he or she is the leading authority in the field. Essays vary in length from 300 to 7000 words; some are personal accounts of experiences or interviews, and some are polemical, advocating a particular point of view, whereas many are descriptive and neutral. It is perhaps inevitable that with so many topics covered by so many different authors, some coverage will overlap, although this can be an advantage. The range of animals includes many invertebrates, insects and spiders, etc., as well as a range of vertebrates, including mammals and birds. Although species names are included in the index and in the guide to related topics, it would have been useful to have a separate systematic index. This would have helped in finding information on a particular species across several topic-based discussions. Each article ends with a 'see also section', which cross-references other related topics, and a 'further resources section', which cites further reading. Although some authors give web addresses for more in-depth information, this is not consistent across all authors. There is, however, a very detailed list of organizations and related websites at the end of volume 3. This appendix will prove very useful for those who need more information on a particular topic or want to pursue their interests further.

Clearly, it is not intended that anyone reads the book from cover to cover, but for the interested person it is a mine of information, and in the words of Jane Goodall '... it is a book that should be on the shelves of every school and university library and in every home.' *The Encyclopedia of Animal Behaviour* is aimed primarily at the upper end of school/undergraduate level of readership; to that end it succeeds very well.

Stephen L. Barlow

BIRDGUIDES LTD. **BWPi: The Birds of the Western Palearctic on interactive DVD-Rom**. 1 DVD. Oxford/Upton Magna: Oxford University Press/BirdGuides, 2004. £169.00 + VAT, available from www.birdguides.com, tel.: 0800 919391.

The original *Birds of the Western Palearctic* is arguably the most significant ornithological publication ever produced for the region. It is now out of print and hard to come by, but fear not because OUP and BirdGuides have produced a DVD-ROM version. Not only does it contain the original text and images, it is also supplemented by a wealth of other images, video clips and sound recordings. Although basically similar in content and scope to an earlier CD-ROM version (see *Ibis* 141: 699–700), this DVD version represents a major advance in several respects. First, the layout is much clearer and more attractive, giving it an overall less claustrophobic and more user-friendly feel. Secondly, navigation between species and between sections within species is greatly improved by use of an 'assets panel'. The following is worth bearing with. An asset is simply any element in a species account, for example a distribution map, a video clip or a song recording. Multiple assets can be combined in any one view for as many species as one chooses by dragging and dropping easily recognized icons. This means that one can have, for example, photographs, song recordings or video clips (or indeed a combination of these) from similar species on the screen at the same time. They can be played one after another for immediate comparison or even at the same time. Playing all of the *Parid* calls concurrently produced an interesting, if 'Hitchcockian', cacophony. Clearly this facility is very useful as a learning aid for identifying species by sight or sound, or for comparing distributions between species. Thirdly, there are far more video clips and sound recordings than in the 1998 CD-ROM version. The Little Bustard *Otis tetrax* foraging in a flower-covered meadow was one of my favourites and there are clips even for some of the more obscure species, such as Philadelphia Vireo *Vireo philadelphicus* and Sooty Gull *Larus hemprichii*. Finally, the search feature is much improved and the ability to find the locations and occurrence of any word in the entire BWP is an extremely useful tool for data collation. BWPi will be of great use and provide much entertainment for professionals and amateurs alike and in my view is well worth the money.

John L. Quinn

COOPER, D. S. **Important Bird Areas of California.** 286 pages. Los Angeles: Audubon California, 2004. Paperback \$19.99 + \$5.00 P+P, available from Audubon California, 11340 W. Olympic Blvd., Suite 209, Los Angeles, CA 90064, USA, ISBN 0-9747277-0-9.

In the 1980s, Birdlife International initiated the Important Bird Areas (IBA) programme as a way of identifying locations of high bird diversity around the world. In 1995, California's IBA programme was established, mostly as a volunteer-driven effort, under the auspices of the American Bird Conservancy and the National Audubon Society, to identify and describe key areas around California that are the most important for birds. This project was expanded into a fully funded research programme in 2000. Thanks to the help of bird distribution experts from various state and federal agencies, conservation groups, and institutions, California's IBA programme was able to conduct a more thorough statewide search for IBAs than previous volunteer efforts were able to achieve. This new reference guide collates their findings.

Cooper has chosen to focus on approximately 150 IBAs in California. Although he acknowledges that prior global assessments of biodiversity have designated the entire California Floristic Province as being globally important, Cooper felt that it would be more useful to conservationists and resource managers if he concentrated his efforts on sites of exceptional biological importance. Each site account includes a description of the terrain, information on the avifauna and an assessment of the pressing conservation issues for the area. In addition, each site account includes a table, which provides information on the sensitive bird species, waterfowl and/or shorebirds observed at each location. An early section of the book summarizes their findings by county, with a series of maps showing the locations of the IBAs throughout the state. Cooper includes a useful table listing all of California's sensitive bird species with both their global and Californian population estimates. Information is also provided in the appendices regarding which sites were nominated as IBAs prior to 2000.

The information provided in this book is a much-needed step towards focusing conservation efforts in California. Although the information in *Important Bird Areas of California* is unlikely to appeal to a general ornithological audience, it will be an invaluable resource to those conservationists, resource managers and policy-makers who have a keen interest in maintaining California's rich avian biodiversity.

Kris Jones

FLEGG, J. **Time to Fly. Exploring Bird Migration.** 184 pages, colour photographs, maps, diagrams. Theftford: British Trust for Ornithology, 2004. Paperback £12.50, ISBN 1-904870-08-2.

This book presents a brief overview of the movement patterns of British birds – whether residents, summer visitors,

winter visitors or passage migrants – placed within the context of their general ecology. The book is based primarily on the information given in *The Migration Atlas* (2002, reviewed in *Ibis* 145: 702). After three brief introductory chapters, dealing mainly with the different types of bird movements, and how they are studied, species accounts are arranged in chapters, according to the habitats occupied, whether Farmland, Woodland, Wetlands, Mountain, moorland and heath, Estuaries, or Exposed coasts. Two final chapters deal with Rarities and Vagrants and Orientation/Navigation, respectively. Each of the main chapters begins with a brief account of the ecological features of the habitat concerned, and then the species are discussed in turn, with the emphasis on their migrations. Different species receive 1–5 paragraphs, depending largely on the amount of information available, and for many species, the migrations are also illustrated by simplified maps. So far as I could tell, the information provided is accurate and up to date (although few references are given), and the book is well written and easy to read. It is suitable for anyone who wants a brief easily absorbed overview of the movement patterns of British birds, without the level of detail provided in the very much larger atlas. I found the book a pleasure to read, and thought it gave good value for money.

I. Newton

FÖGER, M. & PEGORARO, K. **Die Blaumeise: The Blue Tit (*Parus caeruleus*).** 128 pages. Die Neue Brehm-Bücherei, Vol. 643. Hohenwarsleben: Westarp Wissenschaften, 2004. Paperback €24.95, ISBN 3-89432-862-2.

This book provides a very good insight into the biology of Blue Tits *Parus caeruleus*. The authors, Manfred Föger and Karin Pegoraro, work out in detail the bird's biography and present the present knowledge about Blue Tits in a style that appeals to both scientists and interested amateurs. In ten chapters the origin of the name Blue Tit and its similarity across languages, systematics and geographical distribution, nutrition, breeding behaviour (e.g. nesting, physiology of eggs, nestlings and adults, feeding of nestlings), habitat choice, factors determining the viability and mortality of individuals are described. In addition, the importance of Blue Tits as a model organism in ecological and animal behavioural studies is mentioned, and even details such as ecological differences between nestboxes and natural tree holes are considered. The species *P. caeruleus* contains several subspecies that live in habitats with ecologically highly diverse structures from Ireland to the Mediterranean Sea. Consequently, results from population biological studies are not necessarily comparable across populations from different subspecies. Subspecific differences might be as large as those between Blue Tits and their nearest phylogenetic relative the Great Tit (*P. major*) that may live in the same forests but have evolved different life cycle strategies. Finally, the eleventh chapter 'Human attitude to Blue Tits' focuses on human interactions with, and emotions regarding, this bird.

Although this chapter does not really convince me, it might complement, for non-scientists, the former, strictly scientific, presentations. Nevertheless, the extensive reference list is up to date and provides helpful information to the scientifically interested reader. The many coloured figures (some of which are not of the best quality), graphics and tables in the text facilitate understanding.

Summarizing, the authors have discussed many results described in biological studies of Blue Tits in an appealing manner. However, besides the fairly high price, the major disadvantage of 'Die Blaumeise' is that the book's information is only accessible to readers of German.

Jürgen Tomiuk

GREEN, G. **The Birds of Dorset**. 520 pages. London: Christopher Helm, 2004. Hardback £40.00, ISBN 0-7136-6934-9.

This is the fifth of the Helm county ornithologies, with a common format but a praiseworthy diversity of style and presentation. It has been 12 years in the writing. It is exemplary in the handling by one author of a variety of material, which has rarely been so effectively used for a single county, as it includes data not only from the Dorset, Portland and Christchurch Reports, but also from BTO national enquiries and from a tetrad survey by the Dorset Bird Club carried out between 1987 and 1994. Dorset has a wealth of estuaries, lagoons, cliffs and heathland, though the last is a mere remnant of Hardy's Egdon; little downland remains and it lacks sizeable inland waters. It has a virtual island in Portland, which provides excellent sea-watching and is a monitoring station for other migration. In 1974, it absorbed part of S.W. Hampshire, including Christchurch Harbour and a share of the Lower Avon Valley, the earlier records for which are dealt with in a special section.

The challenge presented by the mass of records has been met partly by tabulation and histograms. There are 702 tables; the Norfolk volume in this series has a mere 43, and the Suffolk, Shetland and Scilly books rely on graphs and histograms. As a non-scientist, I must admit to preferring tables, which are here used mainly to display numbers of breeding territories and migrants. Dorset is particularly lucky in having a long series of almost daily records for the latter, most of which are here given as annual totals from 1980 to 1999 (or sometimes from earlier) and enable us to see the fluctuations in species that are seldom quantified, such as Goldcrest *Regulus regulus* and Firecrest *R. ignicapilla*, as well as the better-known 'crashes' in Common Whitethroat *Sylvia communis* and Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata*. Thus the interest of a county ornithology can extend far beyond its boundaries.

It is a rather dry and solid text for those who prefer their Walpole-Bond or Selous, but that is an inevitable consequence of the volume of material. Even in the 1960s, compression was vital if such a book was ever to be published. The author might have restrained his enthusiasm for the loose connection 'with' and have explored a greater variety of punctuation.

There are colour photos of characteristic or famous birds, including an unhappy Allen's Gallinule *Porphyryla alleni* and a wonderfully frontal Bearded Tit *Panurus biarmicus*, and of habitats, but the fierce colouring of some landscapes suggests Cézanne or Vlaminck, and is never seen in my own county next door. Many distribution maps are reproduced. The drawings are most successful with off-shore birds, as it is hard to give small species convincing local backgrounds, though it can be done (as in Sitters' Devon Atlas). There is an end-paper map, but without layer-colouring it cannot convey the physical shape of Dorset; some larger-scale maps of important coastal sites might have been helpful.

David K. Ballance

LEAHY, C.W. **The Birdwatcher's Companion to North American Birdlife**. 1039 pages. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004. Hardback £26.95, ISBN 0-691-09297-4.

The Birdwatcher's Companion to North American Birdlife, by C.W. Leahy, is a revised and updated version of the Birdwatcher's Companion originally released in the early 1980s. This A-Z reference guide provides a wealth of information, from the basics to little-known trivia. Authors are rare who can incorporate both technical and non-technical terminology into an encyclopedia that is readable – much less pleasurable to read – but Leahy has been successful on both counts.

This comprehensive book tells what goes into birds' nest soup, retells the myth of the Phoenix, and lists the state bird for each of the United States. In the same volume, readers can investigate a number of topics, ranging from the number of eggs laid by starlings (4–9, but usually 5–7) to the number of species of thrushes that breed in North America (15, as well as 13 rare visitor and vagrant species). They can also learn about the etymology of bird names, biographies of eminent ornithologists, and the locations of the best-known birding areas in North America. This reader-friendly tome is full of enough ornithological terms, bird-watching jargon, and biological terms relating to habitat, physiology, anatomy and behaviour to keep even the seasoned ornithologist thumbing through its pages.

In the appendices, one can also find checklists of North American Birds, casual and accidental species, as well as alternative phylogenies of North American bird families, classification of major categories of extinct birds, exotic species and a birdwatcher's calendar. Furthermore, illustrations by Gordon Morrison provide a wonderful complement to the text and are listed at the beginning of the book in a separate and highly useful table of contents.

Leahy's clever and engaging writing style clearly conveys his passion for ornithology. It would be difficult to read through this guide and not have some of that enthusiasm rub off. This book will satisfy the experienced birder and enlighten the budding ornithologist. In either case, you will come away from reading this book with a plethora of

new information and an even deeper appreciation for not only North American birdlife but birds the world over.

Kris Jones

Mock, D.W. *More than Kin and Less than Kind*. 267 pages. London: Harvard University Press, 2004. Hardback £18.95, ISBN 0-674-01285-2.

Douglas Mock has been working on family conflicts in egrets and herons for the last 25 years. In this book, he shares his discoveries, along with many other amazing stories, to illustrate the recent advances made in the understanding of parent–offspring conflict and kin competition. The issues that pervade these tales are surprisingly cruel, and much more dramatic than any of Shakespeare's tragic play endings. We have all heard about the dreadful young cuckoos who forcibly evict their host's chicks from the nest in order to be fed and cared for alone by their host. But have you ever been told in detail the formidable story of the larvae of the parasitoid wasp *Copidosoma floridanum*, developing in cabbage moths? In this species, a warrior caste of female larvae are equipped with massive jaws used to kill a large number of their own brothers, in order to adjust the sex ratio of their brood. So, if you think that life for Romeo and Juliet was harsh, think again, and discover siblicidal species.

This book focuses on explaining and illustrating interactions between family members with a theoretical background of behavioural and evolutionary ecology. As Mock demonstrates, much of the family dynamics in the natural world is accounted for by Hamilton's rule, which relates the costs and benefits of altruistic or selfish behaviours to the degree of relatedness between the individuals. The main topics dealt with here are sibling rivalry, sexual conflict and parent–offspring conflict. Many of the issues at hand here come down to finding the best solution against a critical shortage of resources. To illustrate obligate or facultative siblicide, hierarchy between siblings, death via starvation or chick behaviour influencing their parents' care, Mock tells us about a wide diversity of organisms. These include many bird species such as blackbirds, coots, eagles, egrets, gulls or warblers; but also hyenas, marsupials, toads, beetles, rodents, pipefish, oak trees and many others. Initially, the author develops verbal arguments to explain a given behaviour observed in parents or offspring, such as Royal Penguin *Eudyptes schlegeli* mothers kicking out their small first egg. He then moves on to the various hypotheses tested over time by behavioural ecologists. Finally, he uses game theory logic to put the occurrence of the behaviour in probabilistic perspectives, with potential experiments testing the expected frequencies.

At several points during his demonstration, Mock sidetracks on parallel subjects such as the methodological trade-offs encountered by scientists when choosing a study system, or adaptationist hypotheses and the test for behavioural explanations. Although this makes it difficult at times to follow the logic of the main argument under

discussion, these digressions give to the text an enjoyable touch of practicality, which is lacking in many behavioural ecology textbooks.

The style of this book is light and engaging. Mock often uses wit and humour, and he skilfully explains behavioural ecology theory in a simple way, making this book entertaining bed-time reading material for a general audience, rather than a textbook for specialists.

Anne Charmantier

MORCOMBE, M. *Field Guide to Australian Birds*, revised edn. 448 pages, 3000 colour illustrations, 850 maps. Archerfield, Australia: Steve Parrish Publishing, 2003. Softback £29.95, ISBN 174021417X.

For a country of 20 million people, Australia has at least five current field guides. You need at least two, the *Slater Field Guide*, because it is the only pocket-sized one (now in its 7th edition) and one other for more detail. Morcombe's text, illustrations and photos, all his own, comprise a hefty volume. This edition provides updates of rare species' occurrence and includes several new plates to better emphasize identification features; it is now associated with two updating websites. Morcombe's illustrations remain quirky in style, but the book's value is that all illustrations are directly opposite the text on the left-hand page. Morcombe's distribution maps largely conform with Birds Australia's *New Atlas*, but care is needed not to over-interpret; some *New Atlas* gaps may be due to low observer coverage in remote areas. However, some *New Atlas* data suggest that subspecies' geographical separation is less disjunct than Morcombe suggests. None of the latest editions of the other Australian field guides currently in print has a separate section with comprehensive descriptions and illustrations of nests and eggs, although the *Slater Field Guide* does have eggs illustrated at the bottom of the plates. Many do not like Morcombe's approach, but I had found the 2000 edition to be much more useful in the field than I had expected; the revised 2003 edition (despite the garish print quality of my own copy) offered in 2004 improvements for a number of species.

Mike Blair

MUNOZ PEDREROS, A., RAU ACUNA, J. & YANEZ VALENZUELA, J. (eds) *Aves Rapaces de Chile*. 387 pages. Valdivia, Chile: CEA Ediciones, 2004. Paperback £99.00, ISBN 956-7279-08-X.

This is a Spanish-language book on the raptors of Chile that combines 78 pages of illustrations and detailed descriptions of Chile's 34 raptor species with more general information concerning raptor biology and study. In it the editors bring together the knowledge of 25 authors with specialist interest in the raptors of Chile. There are six chapters, starting with a very basic introduction to the group, followed by the species descriptions and then leading the readers into more detailed chapters on raptor

ecology and evolution, classification, techniques and methods of study, and finishing by outlining conservation and management strategies. As well as general information on raptor biology, these chapters contain a wealth of information specific to the species found in Chile. Given how difficult it is to get good ornithological texts in Spanish about local species in much of South America, this will be a valuable text for many Spanish-speaking ornithologists both in Chile and in neighbouring countries. For those who cannot read Spanish, similar information is more easily available in existing English-language publications such as the *Handbook of the Birds of the World* and therefore, interesting though it is, the book is unlikely to have a wider international appeal.

Ross MacLeod

NAISBITT, R. & HOLZ, P. **Captive Raptor Management and Rehabilitation.** 163 pages, many black-and-white illustrations and colour photographs. Surrey, B.C.: Hancock House, 2004. Hardback £25.95, €38.00, US\$39.95, CDN\$49.95, ISBN 0-88839-490-x.

I have practised falconry for 40 years, and whilst I found this an interesting read with some new and useful information to me, I am unsure how practical most of the book would prove to be to the typical raptor-keeper. The authors, an experienced raptor-keeper and a veterinarian, provide information covering a broad field rather superficially.

Many of the numerous tables throughout the book and the colour plates are of interest but of little real value. Chapter 1 looks at raptor survival strategies. Chapters 2–7 and chapter 10 cover various aspects of raptor husbandry, serving as a useful aide-mémoire for the experienced falconer/raptor-keeper. However, for the less experienced, the information lacks the substance that would allow them safely to apply much of what is covered. For example, in chapter 2, 'The Injured Raptor', section 2.12 'The Starving Raptor' fails to give any practical advice on immediate care when a starving hawk presents, despite stating that most raptor-keepers will face this problem. However, in chapter 9, 'The Raptor Diet' (a useful chapter on dietary requirements), one finds the all-important information about re-hydration and gradual re-introduction of solid food. Although this is discussed at a level appropriate to someone with veterinary experience (intravenous administration of pharmaceutical-grade preparations is suggested), this information is useful when read in context with chapter 8, 'Raptor Medicine', in which the treatment of a wide range of injuries and disease is briefly discussed. Although the typical raptor-keeper would be unable to carry out most of the procedures described, they would, however, be able to hold informed discussions on the management of casualties with their veterinarian.

In my opinion the book would be useful to the experienced falconer intending to establish a rehabilitation or display centre, but for the novice it lacks substance.

Donald Peach

NOWAK, E. **Professor Erwin Stresemann (1889–1972).** *Mitteilungen des Vereins Sächsischer Ornithologen, Band 9, Sonderheft 2, 95 pages, 68 black-and-white photographs, 2003. ISSN 0942-7872; ISBN 3-9806583-3-3.*

The Polish-born ornithologist Dr Eugeniusz Nowak has made a speciality in recent years of short but pithy, even controversial, biographical portraits of former colleagues, mainly German or East European. Controversial because, contrary to the usual practice in Germany, he has examined their careers in detail, including the 12 years of the 'Third Reich'. Since 1998 they have been published in various German-language and Polish journals under the general title of 'Reflections on ornithologists I have known'.

This supplementary volume of the journal of the ornithological society of Saxony is his longest contribution so far, which is quite appropriate for the man who was not only a Saxon but also the greatest of them all: Erwin Stresemann. As a student, Nowak knew that he wanted Stresemann to supervise his doctoral thesis on the range expansion of the Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*, an apparent impossibility for a Pole in the middle of the Cold War, but after months in a bureaucratic and political maze he arrived in Berlin in 1956. They remained firm friends.

This excellent biographical 'sketch' (which has a good two-page English summary) nicely complements the weightier publication edited by Jürgen Haffer (reviewed in *Ibis* 143: 507–508, where Stresemann's scientific importance is touched on) in that it deals with Stresemann the man rather than the scientist. In fact it is very unusual in a German biography to include much of a personal, even private nature, still regarded there as an unfortunate Anglo-American habit. But here the approach is just right, giving us a rounded portrait of a great ornithologist who had a reputation for being a rather demanding, even arrogant, teacher and editor, but then he had a lot to be arrogant about. He was well aware of his achievements as a scientist, but he also knew that he had single-handedly, through a combination of placing his best students in the right positions and maintaining contacts in both east and west, twice rescued both the substance and the reputation of German ornithology after two wars.

'His' Zoological Museum of the Humboldt University was literally at the centre of the double political tragedy of Berlin, but it is heartening to read how, after all the disasters, the core of the ornithological collection survived in a bank vault, undamaged by Allied bombing and overlooked by marauding Soviet troops, and how Stresemann laboured to transport the ornithological library away from the eastern front and back to a safe hiding place in Berlin, instead of following an order to join the 'Volkssturm'. There is a delightful extract from a letter describing a birdwatching cruise around the islands of Scotland on the *Devonia*, prior to travelling to Oxford for the 1966 IOC. Many of the photographs are fascinating: one of the first shows the young Stresemann being tattooed by a native in the Moluccas in 1911, while the last, from 2001, shows his

most illustrious student, the late Ernst Mayr (another Saxon), on the occasion of the 75th(!) anniversary of his doctorate, in a reunited Berlin and in the museum where he had been taught by Stresemann.

It was Erwin Stresemann's wish to be buried beside his own teacher Ernst Hartert, the great custodian of the Rothschild Collection in Tring and the man whom he respected above all others. A single gravestone in the wooded cemetery in Berlin-Dahlem carries their two names. Most of those who wished to attend the funeral were refused permission to cross the Berlin Wall.

Brian Hillcoat

RALPH, C.J. & DUNN, E.H. (eds) **Monitoring Bird Populations Using Mist Nets**. 211 pages, *Studies in Avian Biology* no. 29. Cooper Ornithological Society, 2004. Paperback \$23.00, ISBN 0-943610-61-3.

A workshop was held in October 1993 in California on *The use of mist nets to monitor bird populations*, and was attended by many of the leading lights in ringing, demography and statistics. Over 11 years later, the proceedings from the workshop have been published in this special issue of *Studies in Avian Biology*.

The introductory chapter by the editors, Erica Dunn and C. John Ralph, reviews the strengths and weaknesses of mist netting for monitoring purposes and discusses the potential biases in sampling. Eight papers show how mist-netting can be used to monitor abundance, productivity and survival during the breeding season, and draw on examples from the British Trust for Ornithology's Constant Effort Sites (CES) scheme and the North American equivalent Monitoring Avian Productivity and Survivorship (MAPS) project. From a British perspective, three papers use data from the CES scheme. These papers compare trends in adult abundance with those from the Common Birds Census, show how juveniles caught on CES compare well with local productivity (based on nestlings ringed on the same site) and demonstrate how between-year recaptures can be used to estimate adult survival rates. A further 11 papers illustrate how mist-netting can be valuable outside the breeding season, and give examples from studies during spring and autumn migration and from stopover sites.

Three papers listed under 'General Considerations' cover subjects such as using counts of birds ringed as indices to populations, the effectiveness of training ringers at three sites in Canada and the use of capture-recapture models in mist-net studies; this last paper is an excellent summary of this important topic.

Finally, a summary paper from the workshop makes recommendations for the use of mist-nets for inventory and monitoring purposes and highlights the importance of standardized ringing, careful project design and last, but perhaps most importantly, well-trained ringers.

Many of the papers focus on work in North America and Canada with just four papers from Europe; this does not detract from the usefulness of this volume in any way. Given

the long period between the workshop and the production of this volume it is good that the authors were given the chance to update the papers between 2001 and 2003 to include current practices and latest statistical techniques and this certainly adds to the value of this special edition.

This collection of papers will be of interest to researchers at conservation organizations, including the BTO and RSPB, but will also be an invaluable source of references for university researchers undertaking demographic studies of birds. This special volume really deserves to reach a wider audience and the only problem I see for most people will be getting hold of a copy.

Dawn E. Balmer

ROOKMAKER, K., MUNDY, P., GLENN, I. & SPARY, E. **François Levaillant and the Birds of Africa**. xxii + 484 pages, 252 colour illustrations including 58 full-page bird plates. Johannesburg: The Brenthurst Press, 2004. Standard edition £225.00, ISBN 0-909079-59-5. De luxe edition £625.00, ISBN 0-909079-60-0.

Even the standard edition, limited to 850 copies, is sumptuously produced – case-bound, with gilded top edge, head and tail bands, ribbon bookmark, the bird plates on 130 g/m² paper, endpapers with antique maps, and a large 1790 map of southern Africa folded into an end pocket. It and the de luxe edition, of 150 copies in half leather, hand-marbled papers, hand-sewn bands, rounded spine tooled in gold, must be worth every penny to those fortunate enough to acquire them.

François Levaillant (1753–1824) was a colourful and enigmatic figure, a pioneering naturalist who was the first person ever to sail to far distant shores expressly to study birds: he explored inland from the Cape Colony in 1781–1784. Returning to France with 2000 well-prepared bird skins, he gave dramatic and somewhat imaginative accounts of his discoveries, rapidly acquiring fame as Europe's finest naturalist-explorer. His magnificent *Histoire Naturelle des Oiseaux d'Afrique* was produced in six volumes in 1796–1808, but by then his exploits were attracting not only praise but controversy and censure.

Levaillant's main biographers are Quinton *et al.* (*François le Vaillant: Traveller in South Africa and his Collection of 165 Watercolour Paintings 1781–1784*, 2 vols, 1973) and include Slater (*Ibis* 1931), Stresemann (1975), Brooke (1987) and Mearns & Mearns (1988). So why this new book? The Brenthurst Press is the publishing wing of the Brenthurst Library, which possesses a substantial collection of Levaillant's works, including several editions of *Oiseaux d'Afrique* and 'an exceptional pair of volumes in royal quarto format into which are bound 58 original watercolour paintings in addition to the printed monochrome engravings' (evidently by Johann Reinold from Levaillant's originals). The two volumes, published in 1796 and 1799, passed to a French industrialist whose library was auctioned by Sotheby's in 1988, and were purchased by Harry Oppenheimer in 1999 with a view to

'publishing a "bird book" which would include these beautiful watercolours' (so writes Oppenheimer's daughter, Chairman of Brenthurst Press, in her Foreword).

But this book is far more than merely a vehicle for the artwork. Brief biographies of the four authors and the translator – all scholars marrying science and the humanities, with Peter Mundy the only ornithologist – are given on the penultimate page (the last page describes 'The Making of This Book'). A more successful team it would have been hard to assemble. They present not only an interesting commentary on each of the bird paintings but also give a most erudite re-examination, in six lengthy chapters, of this 'flamboyant Gallic adventurer with a cavalier attitude to the truth ... against the backdrop of the world of natural history and its practice in the late European enlightenment. The potent mix of science and commerce is reflected in [his] pursuit of knowledge about the animal kingdom with active trading in specimens ... shrewdly negotiating the dangers, upheavals and transformations of the French revolution and the Napoleonic era to achieve his scientific ambitions.' The chapters treat Levaillant in perspective; his formative years; the African journeys; the merchant-naturalist and man of letters; the production of his bird books; and his cabinet of specimens.

Not all of the paintings are of African birds. Several are of Neotropical species from Levaillant's childhood in Surinam or of European and Oriental ones, and some are unidentifiable because they are clearly contrived composites; hence the 'cavalier attitude to the truth'.

C. Hilary Fry

SHUFORD, W. D. & MOLINA, K.C. (eds) **Ecology and Conservation of Birds of the Salton Sink: An Endangered Ecosystem**. vii + 169 pages, photographs, maps, tables. *Studies in Avian Biology* no. 27. Camarillo: Cooper Ornithological Society, 2004. \$17.00 US postage included, available from Cooper Ornithological Society, c/o Western Foundation of Vertebrate Zoology, 439 Calle San Pablo, Camarillo, CA 93010, USA.

An engineering miscalculation in 1905 funnelled water from the Colorado River into the Salton Sink in south-eastern California, thus creating the inland lake we now know as the Salton Sea. The sea and its shores have long been a popular destination for birdwatchers and ornithologists alike, with the spectacle of hundreds of thousands of breeding and over-wintering aquatic birds being of primary interest.

The avifauna of the Salton Sea has commanded substantial interest in recent years due to its rapidly increasing salinity. In addition to the current volume, recent publications include *A Guide to the Birds of the Salton Sea* (B. W. Massey & R. Zembal. 2002. University of Arizona Press, Tucson) summarizing seasonal surveys at spots around the sea, and the comprehensive *Birds of the Salton Sea: Status, Biogeography and Ecology* (reviewed in *Ibis* 146: 180).

Shuford and Molina have included 16 papers involving a total of 34 authors and a variety of topics. There is substantial coverage of the history of the sea and early ornithological explorations. This sets the stage for the other contributions dealing with the current status of birds in the wetlands and adjacent agricultural areas. The importance of the sea and the wider Salton Sink area not only as a breeding site for large numbers of herons and ibises but also as a migration stopover spot and overwintering area for myriads of pelicans, ducks, geese and grebes is emphasized. This volume arose from the concern of four major ornithological societies that scattered information from diverse research studies might be overlooked in the planning process for rehabilitation and conservation of the sea and the interactions of the wildlife resources of the whole region. This resulting compilation provides a wealth of current information, which will be valuable for planners and managers as well as the ornithological community. It is a job well done.

Charles T. Collins

SUTHERLAND, W. J., NEWTON, I. & GREEN, R. (eds) **Bird Ecology and Conservation: A Handbook of Techniques**. 386 pages. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004. Hardback £55.00, ISBN 0-19-852085-9. Paperback £24.95, ISBN 0-19-852086-7.

This is an absolutely essential handbook of research methods for new ornithological researchers or conservation ecologists; it also covers many subjects in sufficient detail to be useful to established researchers within other fields. The book collects together 18 separate expert authors, most of them 'household' names in biological research. Fourteen separate chapters deal with subjects including survey techniques, monitoring breeding, survival and migration; catching, handling and radiotracking birds; techniques of post-mortems, physiology and genetics; diet and foraging measurement; habitat assessment and management; and exploitation and conservation management of birds. Obviously with such an inclusive approach most subjects are dealt with in superficial detail, but with clear pointers to the best, more detailed texts: for example, this book may suggest the doubly labelled water approach to you if you have an energetics question, or the appropriate census method if you have an abundance question, but you will have to go elsewhere to learn how to answer your questions properly. But knowing that something can be done, and good examples of how it can be done, are the crucial first steps in any research project; this handbook should greatly increase the use of best ornithological practice worldwide. I expect every research ornithologist, from Masters to Professor level, to get this book.

The series editors are also to be praised for donating free copies of the handbook to libraries and research institutions in the developing world.

Will Cresswell

TOMIAŁOJC, L. & STAWARCZYK, T. **Awifauna Polski: Rozmieszczenie, liczebność i zmiany. [The Avifauna of Poland: Distribution, Numbers and Trends. Volumes 1–2]** (in Polish, with English summaries). 870 pages, many line-drawings, 56 maps, 32 graphs, 12 tables, 58 colour photographs. Wrocław: PTPP 'pro Natura', 2003, pronatura@eko.wroc.pl. Hardback, 49 zł, ISBN 83-919626-1-X.

Authors and publisher deserve warm praise for this splendid two-volume work on Poland's birds. The books are sturdily bound in attractively designed covers, and there are attractive drawings and superb colour photographs that help to enliven the text. *The Avifauna of Poland [Awifauna Polski]* is a direct descendant of the first author's *Ptaki Polski* published in 1972 (translated as *Birds of Poland*, 1976) and his *Ptaki Polski, rozmieszczenie i liczebność*, which appeared in 1990 (see *Ibis* 132: 632). The Polish bird list contains 436 species, of which 247 have been bred at least once, although a smaller number (227) have done so regularly in the last 25 years. The book reviews the country's birds over the last 200 years, the main focus being on the latter part of the 20th century.

For the reader with no knowledge of Polish, there is a six-page English summary and each species account is summarized briefly in English too. It is a pity that the entire introductory section is not given in English translation, but there is some attempt to help the reader with the interpretation of the Polish text, and furthermore, the useful information provided in the summary could be supplemented by going to the chapter on Poland by M. Gromadzki and M. Wieloch in *Important Bird Areas in Europe I: Northern Europe* (Heath & Evans, BirdLife International, 2000).

Poland, which covers an area of 312 680 km² and has a population of 38.6 million, is a predominantly low-lying country. Biogeographically, it may be divided into a northern coastal zone, below which come post-glacial moraine hills (with lakes), the Central European Plain, hills and basins, and finally the southern mountains (Carpathians, Sudetes). There are wonderful wetlands, notably the Biebrza Marshes, also sites in the Narew, Wisła [Vistula] and Odra [Oder] river valleys; forests too, including the celebrated Białowieża on the border with Belarus in the northeast. The main land-use (c. 55% of the country) is agriculture, chiefly arable and small-farmer fields, producing a rich mosaic of different crops. Even now, the image of the Polish farmer working with horses while storks nonchalantly go about their business nearby has not disappeared completely. Censuses in 1974, 1984 and 1994 put the Polish White Stork *Ciconia ciconia* population at 34 000–41 000 pairs, more than any other country in the world. In addition, Tomiałojć and Stawarczyk describe farmland birds as being 'fairly safe', at least in the short term, with the increasing percentage of abandoned farmland and much-reduced use of biocides. Even so, the big question, especially now that Poland has joined the EU, is

whether we shall see a change from small, sustainable farms to large-scale units practising intensive agriculture. There are threats to other habitats, including wetlands – drainage to reduce flooding, dam construction, clear-felling of riverine forests. The new *Awifauna Polski* makes abundantly clear what could be lost in this land of wildlife riches.

The population status of the six Globally Endangered species found in Poland (BirdLife) may be summarized as follows: Ferruginous Duck *Aythya nyroca* (declining, c. 40 pairs); White-tailed Eagle *Haliaeetus albicilla* (increased from 180–200 pairs in the early 1980s to 450–500 in the late 1990s); Greater Spotted Eagle *Aquila clanga* (15–20 pairs, with most in the Biebrza Marshes); Corn Crake *Crex crex* (traditionally estimated at 17 000 males, 30 000–40 000 by extrapolating from randomized samples; recent recovery, but long-term decline despite adapting to breeding in oilseed rape); Great Snipe *Gallinago media* (700–800 males, most in the Biebrza Marshes; decline in Narew valley); Aquatic Warbler *Acrocephalus paludicola* (steady decline; total now 2900–2950 males, with most in the Biebrza Marshes).

M.G. Wilson

VAUGHAN, R. & JENNINGS, N.V. **The Stone Curlew *Burhinus oedicnemus***. 345 pages. Falmouth: Isabelline Books, 2005. Hardback £35.00, ISBN 0-954955-6-0.

After first introducing the world's Burhinidae species, this book reviews the literature on the Stone Curlew *Burhinus oedicnemus* in 12 chapters covering field characters, history, voice, habitat, population studies, migration, social life, breeding biology, diet, captive birds, decline and conservation. It includes 28 (19 colour) photographs by the authors, though not arranged consecutively, 13 figures and no less than 75 tables. The book is aimed at both bird-watchers and more serious students.

With a present stronghold in Spain, the Stone Curlew's marked European decline is chronicled – mainly from habitat loss, accelerated by the growth of taller grass and other vegetation, as grazing by rabbits and farm animals has reduced. Correspondingly, the increases following the RSPB's promotion of grazing are reported, the extensive work of Rhys Green and his team being reflected in the text and tables. Other aspects well brought out include the frequent dependence on growing crops for nesting and feeding, wide-ranging diet and intriguing behaviour and vocalizations.

The authors also report on their own field studies, mainly in France (the Grands Causses) but also in England, Mallorca and the Canary Islands. These include over 100 h of watching breeding birds and 76 h at autumn roosts, the results embodied in 17 tables and seven sonagrams. While their 40 nests are equivalent to only a fraction of those studied by Green and his colleagues (Table 21), they were able to make useful observations on breeding behaviour, various calls, the central role of sideways throwing and nest-scraping in courtship, besides some interesting theorizing on the purpose of nest material.

The authors did not succeed in applying Green and Bowden's method (1986) for sexing individuals, although it was always clear that this would require practice (and a good telescope) – so they cast no new light on the trios regularly noted on territories since first studied by Selous in 1916. Having read all his original diaries, this reviewer was pleased to find his pioneering work recognized, but surprised to find him charged with having 'fabricated a mythology' (p. 170) about these trios. As a committed Darwinian, Selous was not someone to be guilty of anthropomorphism and rather, he used metaphorical language to make vivid his careful observations. Some of these, as the authors mention, have still not been effectively followed up; one such is the stimulating effect of rain on wing-waving at autumn gatherings, apparently undocumented since 1900.

An impressive feature of the book is the wide coverage of papers in many languages including Russian, with the reference list running to over 700 titles, more than a third since BWP3 (1983). As befits a historian senior author, the history of the species is well covered back to the 16th century when the French naturalist Belon first described it, having seen it for the first time – in England.

The Stone Curlew is a fascinating and intriguing species even for many who seldom see it, and for its followers this well-produced book cannot fail to be of much interest.

Leo Kinlen

WEMBER, V. **Die Namen der Vögel Europas. Bedeutung der deutschen und wissenschaftlichen Namen.** 207 pages, 181 colour photographs. Wiebelsheim, Germany: AULA-Verlag, 2005. €24.95, ISBN 3-89104-678-2.

The title of this new book translates as *The names of the birds of Europe: Meaning of the German and scientific names*. Whilst the origins and meanings of some German or scientific names are immediately obvious, e.g. 'Rotkehlchen' [red throat] for the Robin, the origins and meanings of other German or scientific names are more mysterious, e.g. 'Mehlschwalbe' [literally flour swallow] for the House Martin. This book aims to enlighten the reader about the often surprising and sometimes even amusing origins and meanings of the German or scientific names of 440 European breeding bird species. Thus, the House Martin got its German name because its underparts are of such a pure white that 'the swallow must have sat in flour'. Although the German names may not interest English readers, those with some knowledge of the German language may find the derivation and explanations of Latin names to be more useful. Furthermore, for book collectors, the 181, often beautiful, albeit rather small, colour photographs of these European bird species may be of interest. Of course, this book is also an almost inexhaustible source for bird trivia quizzes. Finally, there is a very well-written introduction of about 20 pages discussing in more general terms how bird names came about, e.g. by imitating bird sounds or literally translating scientific names, which resulted in one

of the most irritating German bird names, i.e. 'Alpenstrandläufer' [alpine wader] for the Dunlin, derived from the literal translation of its Latin name *Calidris alpina*. A brief overview of the rules of nomenclature and taxonomy and a brief history of the most important ornithological taxonomists rounds off the introduction.

Bruno A. Walther

WILLSON, S.K. **Obligate Army-Ant-Following Birds: a Study of Ecology, Spatial Movement Patterns, and Behaviour in Amazonian Peru.** 67 pages. *Ornithological Monographs no. 55*. Washington, DC: American Ornithologists' Union, 2004. Paperback \$10.00, ISBN 0-943610-60-5.

Ant-following birds, which 'make their living' from food resources attempting to escape army ants, fascinated early naturalists working in the Neotropics, and have generated a body of anecdotal literature from the time of A.R. Wallace in the 19th century. Starting in the 1950s, E.O. Willis took the study of the ant-followers to another level during a journey of almost 50 years that would take him and his wife, Y. Oniki, throughout the Neotropics, and result in a rich collection of over 40 monographs and papers carefully detailing foraging habits, vocalizations, interspecific interactions and other aspects of daily behaviour of ant-following birds. Now, Susan K. Willson has taken our knowledge of the ant-followers to still another level of understanding through an intensive 5-year study of five obligate ant-following birds (species that depend completely on ants) and two species of army ants (*Eciton burchelli* and *Labidus praedator*) at a single site in southeastern Peru.

The initial two chapters of this fine monograph afford introductions to the site, birds and ants. Chapter 3, Resource Use and Species Coexistence, provides results of testing seven hypotheses regarding the behavioural adaptations that permit coexistence of the five obligate ant-followers. Chapter 4, Survival Rates and Population Dynamics, utilizes data from a 5-year period to examine the differential effect on populations of biotic and abiotic influences, such as changes in army ant colony density and rainfall. Chapter 5, Nesting and Reproduction, provides a wealth of new data on reproductive behaviour of four of the five avian species. A final chapter, Conclusions and Future Questions, integrates the results, asking, for example, whether nest-site selection might constrain population densities, and suggests avenues for future research.

The substance of Willson's results cannot be conveyed briefly, but two examples stand out. First, Willson found a high degree of population instability in the study area – total population of the five species dropped almost in half over the study period – and also differences in population stability among species. Secondly, Willson found that the Sooty Antbird *Myrmeciza fortis* was unique among the species in the small size of its home range and its defence against conspecifics. Previously, field observers had been unsure as to whether the Sooty Antbird foraged away from

army ants for part of the time. Willson found that Sooty Antbirds were indeed obligate ant-followers, but that they preferred the services of the smaller ant, *L. praedator*, which forages underground much of the time and erupts to the surface irregularly, although it occurs at a higher density than the larger *E. burchelli*. Thus, Willson solved a mystery of foraging behaviour and provided measurements of the ecological niche that permits the Sooty Antbird to coexist with the other ant-following species.

Susan Willson's study stands as a model for the kind of work that is needed for the understanding and conservation of Neotropical birds. The Willson study was restricted to floodplain forest and wet seasons (which may account for much of the population fluctuation), and even within the same region, studies of ant-followers in terra firma forest and dry seasons would be valuable complements. We recommend this monograph highly.

Morton L. Isler
Phyllis R. Isler

Also received

ANTONCHIKOV, A.N. [**The Great Bustard: Current Status and Methods for Conserving Birds in the Wild**] (in Russian). 34 pages, line-drawings, 2 maps. Saratov: 'Nauchnaya kniga', 2004. Paperback, price not known, ISBN 5-93888-404-7. Email: contact (A.N. Antonchikov, Director of the Project 'The living symbol of a small homeland') rbcusb@overta.ru

The European Russian population of the Great Bustard *Otis tarda* was put at 8000–10 000 in 2000, with the majority (6000–7000) in the Saratov Region. In this slim booklet of five chapters, the author is strongly critical of the practice of collecting 'doomed' eggs for incubation in captive breeding centres and attempts to release any chicks reared back into the wild, nor does he support the export of eggs or chicks for re-introduction attempts abroad (e.g. Ukraine, England). Conservation measures must, in Antonchikov's view, concentrate on (re-)creating the best-possible conditions for the survival of wild Great Bustards in their Saratov stronghold.

M.G.W.

ARKHIPOV, A.M. & FESENKO, H.V. [**The Breeding Birds of the Kuchurhan Lyman [Kuchurganskiy Liman] and its Environs (North-Western Black Sea Coastal Area)**] (in Russian). 51 pages, 1 map, 9 black-and-white photographs. Kiev [Kyiv]: Ukrainian Society for the Protection of Birds [UTOP], 2004. Paperback, price not known.

The 'liman' or lagoon referred to, a mesotrophic waterbody, is part of the Dniester [Dniester] river system, which forms the border between Ukraine and Moldova. It is about 24 km north to south, including fishponds on the upper reaches, and covers c. 3000 ha. The text of this book is based on observations made in the period 1982–2003. Of the 100 breeding species recorded, 27 are largely associated

with human settlements and 23 are found mainly beyond a 1-km strip of dry land adjoining the liman. There are detailed accounts for 50 species. Man-made changes to the environment and disturbance have had a severe impact on the wildlife at this site. Almost all the young produced annually by the Ferruginous Duck *Aythya nyroca* (13–20 pairs), a Ukrainian Red Data Book species, are shot by hunters.

M.G.W.

BAKER, J.A. **The Peregrine**. 191 pages. New York: New York Review Books, 2005. Paperback £7.99, \$14.00, ISBN 1-59017-133-0.

First published in 1967 and winner of the 1968 Duff Cooper prize for non-fiction writing, this evocative book records the daily activities of a pair of Peregrines in the Essex marshes from October to March.

M.L.B.

BEVOL'SKAYA, M.V. [**Reproduction of the Ratitae. Nedification [sic]. Oviposition. Incubation**] (in Russian). 239 pages, many figures, including black-and-white photographs, and tables. Kiev: 'Logos', 2004. Hardback, price not known, ISBN 966-581-514-8.

The 'Askania-Nova' Biosphere Reserve in southern Ukraine was the first private reserve established in Imperial Russia (1874). Within its confines lies a zoological park with a large collection of captive animals and birds. Three bird species living and breeding there in near-natural conditions are the subjects of this book: the Ostrich *Struthio camelus*, Emu *Dromaius novaehollandiae* and Greater Rhea *Rhea americana*. Chapter 1 reviews the literature (16 pages of references) on Ratites in the wild and captivity, their breeding biology and egg characteristics. There is a full account of the exploitation of the Ostrich for feathers and meat. The following five chapters describe all aspects of the largely successful long-term experiment to establish captive-breeding populations of the three species at Askania-Nova. This impressive book is entirely in Russian, but one English-language paper by the author (*Trans. Congr. Int. Union Game Biol.* 18(1), 1991: 479–482) could be consulted on the nesting behaviour of the zoo's Ostriches.

M.G.W.

BLASI, C., D'ANTONI, S., DUPRÉ, E. & LA POSTA, A. **Atti del Convegno 'La Conoscenza Botanica e Zoologica in Italia: Dagli Inventari al Monitoraggio' 14 dicembre 2001, Università di Roma 'La Sapienza'. Quaderni di Conservazione della Natura no. 18, 234 pages. Modena: Ministero Dell'Ambiente e Della Tutela del Territorio & Istituto Nazionale per la Fauna Selvatica 'Alessandro Ghigi'. ISSN 1592-2901.**

This series provides a forum for wildlife preservation and management strategies in Italy. Papers describing the

species checklist of the Italian fauna project, breeding bird monitoring in Italy and the National Ecological Network for the Conservation of Vertebrate Biodiversity have ornithological interest.

M.L.B.

BOKMA, F. Why Most Birds Are Small – A Macroecological Approach to the Evolution of Body Size. *Acta Universitatis Ouluensis A Scientiae Rerum Naturalium* 411. Oulu: Oulun Yliopisto, 2004. Paperback, ISBN 951-42-7344-3, PDF, ISBN 9514273451, herkules oulu.fi/isbn9514273451/

The author suggests that the variation in body size between bird species is a result of the pace and mode of evolution and probably occurs at the moment of speciation.

M.L.B.

EARLEY, C.G. Hawks & Owls of the Great Lakes Region and Eastern North America. 128 pages, 180 colour photographs, maps. Buffalo: Firefly Books, 2004. Hardback £12.95, \$24.95, €25.00, ISBN 1-55297-903-2. Paperback £7.92, \$16.95, ISBN 1-55297-847-8.

With over 180 excellent colour photographs, both adult and first-year birds representing 39 species are covered in this superb field guide. Additional information for each species includes: maps showing breeding and wintering areas, size comparisons to other more common birds, descriptions of adults and juveniles by sex, both perched and flying, and descriptions of vocalizations. Perhaps the most useful items are the comparison charts found in the back, allowing the reader to see near-perfect photographs of a number of similar species at once instead of having to flip through multiple pages throughout the book as the species in question flies away.

K.B.

EARLEY, C.G. Waterfowl of Eastern North America. 158 pages, 400 colour photographs, maps. Buffalo: Firefly Books, 2004. Hardback £16.00, \$29.95, ISBN 1-55407-058-9. Paperback £10.70, \$19.95, ISBN 1-55407-057-0.

This is an excellent field guide following the same successful format as *Hawks and Owls*. Over 30 species of waterfowl and 'duck-like' birds (ducks, swans, geese, loons, grebes, cormorants, pelicans, coots, moorhens) are covered, and illustrated with excellent photographs of both males and females. As with *Hawks and Owls*, useful comparison photographs complete the guide.

M.L.B.

FESENKO, H.V. & BOKOTEJ, A.A. [The Annotated List of the Ukrainian Scientific Names of the Bird Species Belonging to the Fauna of Ukraine] (in Ukrainian). 44 pages. Kyiv–Lviv: Ukrainian Society for the Protection of Birds [UTOP], 2002. Paperback, price not known. Contact email utop@iptelecom.net.ua

The first edition of this booklet appeared in 2000 (see *Ibis* 143: 347). The systematic list in this second edition, which gives the authorized Ukrainian, scientific, Russian and English names of 414 species, is preceded by a history of Ukrainian nomenclature and a review of changes in specific and generic names that occurred in the 20th century.

M.G.W.

GALLIMORE, C. & APPLETON, T. Bird Brain of Britain: Pit your Wits against the Experts. 180 pages, cartoons. London: Christopher Helm, 2004. Paperback £7.99, ISBN 0-7136-7036-3.

Bird Brain of Britain, or as Bill Oddie calls it in his foreword to this book, 'the public humiliation and embarrassment of so-called experts', is a popular and entertaining event in the format of the BBC quiz programme *Mastermind*, held at the annual British Birdwatching Fair from 1999 to 2003. This book contains the questions, answers, winners, losers and a summary of the year's targeted conservation project.

M.L.B.

GUITIÁN RIVERA, J. Guía de las aves de O Caurel. 150 pages, illustrations, colour photographs, maps. Barcelona: Lynx Edicions, 2004. Paperback £12.50, ISBN 8487334687.

This is a guide to the birds of the Sierra de O Caurel, a range of mountains aligned northeast–southwest, separating Galicia from León in northern Spain. Around 100 species of birds are to be found in the area, including the endangered Golden Eagle *Aquila chrysaetos* and Eagle Owl *Bubo bubo*. Six birdwatching trails, ranging from 2 to 8 h, complete the guide.

M.L.B.

HEINTZELMAN, D.S. Hawks and Owls of Eastern North America. 203 pages, 110 photographs. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2004. Hardback £20.50, ISBN 0-8135-3350-3.

This concise book, in addition to providing descriptions of the raptors of Eastern North America, also includes chapters on raptor ecology, raptor migration and invasion, raptor conservation, and recreational raptor watching. Although having over 80 black-and-white and 30 colour photographs, by size and design it is more a reference book to be kept at home than a book to be taken in the field. For individual species, in-depth information is provided on

habitat, distribution, diets, nesting and life cycle, behaviour, migration, and population status. It is ideal for raptor enthusiasts and the general public and includes a reference section for each chapter.

K.B.

HOLLOWAY, J.E. **Dictionary of Birds of the United States.** 244 pages, illustrations. Portland, Oregon, and Cambridge, UK: Timber Press, 2003. Hardback £14.99, ISBN 0-88192-600-0.

This dictionary, which covers the species found in all 50 US states, is organized alphabetically by genus and then species. Unlike earlier dictionaries devoted to the region, it includes introduced and escaped species as well as rare visitors. The meanings of the binomial names in Latin or Greek are given, and, for names derived from the Greek, their spelling in the modern Greek alphabet with transliteration to the Latin alphabet are provided. The origin of common names is also included. This book will be of help to anyone interested in learning about the origin and meaning of the names of their favourite species.

C.F.T.

KALYAKIN, M.V. (Compiler) **[Birds of Moscow and Moscow Region – 2002]** (in Russian, with English summary and captions). 268 pages, maps, tables, 8 colour photographs. Moscow: GEOS, 2004. Paperback, price not known. Contact email kalyakin@zmmu.msu.ru

This fourth review in the series (see *Ibis* 146: 185) is the largest yet and is based on information submitted for the period November 2001 to October 2002 by 161 observers. The bare statistics are: 141 bird species recorded in Moscow (54 breeding, one probably breeding) and 216 outside the city limits (138 confirmed, six probable breeders). Details of all records and species are presented in four appendices. There are chapters on rare birds, winter and summer abundance of waterbirds, ringing, notes on feeding and breeding behaviour, a list of 2001–02 publications, occurrence of Nuthatch *Sitta europaea asiatica* in the Moscow Region, the first paper on the Region's birds (1802), the creation of a Records Committee, the plan to write a new regional handbook and, preceding that, preparation of an atlas using data gathered during 1999–2003.

M.G.W.

KAPLAN, G. **Australian Magpie: Biology and Behaviour of an Unusual Songbird.** 142 pages, illustrations. Collingwood, Australia: CSIRO Publishing, 2004. Paperback £20.00, €30.00, \$Au39.95, ISBN 0-643-09068-1.

Popular account of Australian Magpies *Gymnorhina tibicen*.

M.L.B.

KASPAREK, M. (ed.) **Contributions to the Knowledge of the Mammals of the Middle East.** 168 pages, *Zoology in the Middle East* volume 33. Heidelberg: Kasperek Verlag, 2004. ISSN 0939-7140.

Two papers, in this volume devoted to Middle East mammals, examine the diet of owls through pellet analysis in order to establish mammal presence and distribution. In the first, seven species of small mammals constituted three-quarters of the items eaten by Eagle Owls *Bubo bubo* in central Syria, with the Long-eared Hedgehog *Hemiechinus auritus* accounting for a quarter of the total. The second study, from several localities in Syria, identified 23 species of small mammals and was useful in extending the known range of some of the rodents identified.

M.L.B.

LECROY, M. **Type specimens of Birds in the American Museum of Natural History. Part 5. Passeriformes: Alaudidae, Hirundinidae, Motacillidae, Campephagidae, Pycnonotidae, Irenidae, Laniidae, Vangidae, Bombycillidae, Dulidae, Cincidae, Troglodytidae, and Mimidae.** 154 pages. *Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History* 278. New York: American Museum of Natural History, 2003. Paperback \$20.00, available from Department of Library Services, American Museum of Natural History, Central Park West at 79th St., New York, NY 10024, <http://library.amnh.org/index.html>, ISSN 0003-0090.

The publication's abstract concisely summarizes this fifth part of the *Type Specimens of Birds in the American Museum of Natural History* as the 'taxa covered in volume 9 of Peters' *Check-list of Birds of the World*.' 'The original description of each taxon has been consulted, coordinates given for type localities when possible, currently accepted names for the taxa included, and comments on taxonomic history are provided. 533 published names are treated. Types of 11 of these are not in AMNH; the type of one is not extant; and three specimens with supposed type status are shown to have no nomenclatural standing.'

M.L.B.

LEGGE, S. **Kookaburra: King of the Bush.** 117 pages, black-and-white & colour photographs, figures, maps. Collingwood: CSIRO Publishing, 2004. Au\$34.95, ISBN 0-643-09063-0.

This is a clearly written and interesting synopsis of the natural history and complex social behaviour of the two Australian Kookaburras, the Laughing Kookaburra *Dacelo novaeguineae* and the Blue-winged Kookaburra *D. leachii*.

M.L.B.

REINKING, D.L. (ed.) **Oklahoma Breeding Bird Atlas**. 519 pages, over 200 colour photographs, 200 maps. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2004. Hardback £68.00, \$59.95, ISBN 0-8061-3409-7. Paperback £35.50, \$34.95, ISBN 0-8061-3614-6.

This first breeding bird atlas for the State of Oklahoma utilizes the standardized procedures presented in the *Handbook for Atlasing American Breeding Birds*. This makes sense as Oklahoma's six neighbouring states also followed these procedures for their own atlas studies, enabling evaluation of breeding bird populations over a larger area. The standard U.S. Geological Survey 7.5-minute quadrangle map formed the stratified random sampling unit, which resulted in 583 blocks to survey over the 5-year period 1997–2001. Surveys were completed for 97% of the blocks. Of the 212 species recorded in this 'snapshot', 198 were noted as possible, probable and confirmed breeders. Species accounts, which form the bulk of the book, cover description, breeding habitat, nesting ecology, numbers and distribution. Historical and current breeding records are noted and population trends assessed. Each account includes a map and excellent colour photograph.

M.L.B.

TAYLOR, R.C. **A Birder's Guide to Southeastern Arizona**, 2nd edn. 374 pages, line drawings, maps. Colorado Springs: American Birding Association, 2005. Paperback \$24.95, ISBN 1-878788-22-1.

In 1995, at the ABA's request, Richard Taylor revised James Lane and Harold Holt's original *A Birdwatcher's Guide to Southeastern Arizona*. This latest edition provides up-to-date information and maps on the more than 400 species of birds that inhabit the region. Descriptions of the nine primary sites and an additional 15 locations form the bulk of the book. These are preceded by a succinct and informative introduction particularly useful for visiting birders and followed by a section *Specialties of Southeastern Arizona* providing habitat descriptions and status. The penultimate section provides bar graphs illustrating habitat, altitude, abundance and seasonal occurrence for each species. Lists of other vertebrates, tear-out trail maps and selected references complete the guide.

M.L.B.

TENNANT, A. **On the Wing**. 304 pages. London: Secker & Warburg, 2005. Hardback £18.99, ISBN 0-436-20541-6.

Readers follow along for the adventure while author Alan Tennant and pilot George Vose, in a Cessna, chase Peregrine Falcons *Falco peregrinus* tagged with radio transmitters from Texas to the Arctic and later back south into Belize in the mid-1980s. This true story provides first-hand insight into the lives of Peregrines while on migration and on breeding territories in Alaska in addition to a rare glimpse into the lives of falcon trappers on Padre Island, Texas, and field biologists in Alaska. Other than a few inaccuracies regarding credit for research, the author provides crisp and vivid descriptions while leading the reader on an ever-changing narrative.

K.B.

WAINWRIGHT, B.P. **Habitat Preferences of Rufous Nightingale on Thorne Moors**. 31 pages. THMCF Technical Report no. 11. Doncaster: Thorne & Hatfield Conservation Forum, 2004. £4.00 + £1.50 P+P available from THMCFPublications@aol.com, or Thorne & Hatfield Moors Conservation Forum, c/o Doncaster Museum, Chequer Road, Doncaster, DN1 2AE, ISSN 1468-2087.

This study showed, as expected, that the availability of dense cover was the most important single habitat requirement for Rufous Nightingale *Luscinia megarhynchos* on Thorne Moors (part of the Humberhead Peatlands National Nature Reserve). Future plans to return the area to a self-sustaining peat-forming mire will not affect the woodland areas where the Nightingale breeds.

M.L.B.

WHEATLEY, N. **Dónde observar aves en Europa y toda Rusia**. 468 pages, illustrations & maps. Barcelona: Lynx Edicions, 2004. Paperback £15.50, ISBN 8487334571.

This translates as *Where to watch birds in Europe & Russia* and was originally published in English by Christopher Helm in 2000 (see *Ibis* 143: 165).

M.L.B.